of by the Central Government as per provisions of Section 5(1) of the aforesaid Act. At present, no proposal for grant of Mining Lease in favour of Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Ltd. is pending with the Central Government.

(b) Does not arise, in view of (a) above.

Coal requirement in the Country

†753. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the stock of coal to meet the domestic and industrial requirements of the country; and

(b) the effective steps being taken by Government to maintain availability as well as the balance between the demand and supply of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) The total production of coal in the country to meet the domestic and industrial requirements in the year 2001-02 was 327.64 million tonnes (provisional).

(b) The following steps have been taken to maintain availability as well as the balance between the demand and supply of coal:

(i) Coal import has been placed Open General Licence.

(ii) Allotment of coal mining blocks for captive end use; 27 blocks have already been allotted to different parties for capitive use.

(iii) The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 to open coal sector for private sector participation without restriction of captive consumption, has been introduced in the Parliament.

(iv) Revision of coal mining policy—State Governments and State public sector units have been allowed to open underground and opencast mines without any restriction of "Isolated small pockets."

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.